

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5637
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY PARIS
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 0935

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PK, IN, PEPR
SUBJ: GOP REACTION TO VAJPAYEE VISIT SPECULATION

1. THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN, INCREASINGLY CONCERNED BY
SPECULATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ABOUT MAJOR ADVANCES
IN INDO-PAK RELATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE VAJPAYEE VISIT, HAS MOVED
TO DAMPEN THE INTERNATIONAL ENTHUSIASM, AND CONVERSELY TO CALM
DOMESTIC FEARS OF GOP "SELL-OUT." ALL PAKISTAN PAPERS
JANUARY 27 FRONT-PAGE STORIES, ATTRIBUTED TO "OFFICIAL
SOURCES", THAT THE INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER WILL NOT
BRING ANY "PACKAGE PROPOSALS" WHEN HE VISITS PAKISTAN.
STORIES ADD THAT THIS CLARIFICATION HAS BEEN CONVEYED
TO PAK EMBASSY IN DELHI BY GOI.

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2. ARTICLES NOTE THAT IN RESPONSE TO STORIES ABROAD
CONCERNING TRANSIT FACILITIES AND A REGIONAL COMMON
MARKET, VAJPAYEE WILL MAKE "PRIMARILY A GOODWILL
VISIT WITH NO SPECIFIC AGENDA." GOVERNMENT INSPIRED STORIES
ALSO MAKE NECESSARY OBEISANCE TO KASHMIR ISSUE
BY STATING THAT TALKS WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR
A "WIDE-RANGING REVIEW OF BILATERAL RELATIONS INCLUDING

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SIMLA ACCORD". IN THIS
CONTEXT, GOP WILL RAISE "QUESTION OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR" SINCE
IT IS THE ONLY PROVISION NOT YET IMPLEMENTED.

3. NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ADD THAT IN CONTEXT OF REVIEW OF
TRADE RELATIONS, GOP WILL NOTE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A "SUB-
STANTIAL JUMP" IN INDIAN EXPORTS TO PAKISTAN; ARTICLES
SURMISE IT IS DUE TO INDIA'S "MORE RESTRICTIVE IMPORT
POLICY." STORIES ADD THAT "PAKISTAN NEEDS TO SUBJECT ITS
TRADE WITH INDIA TO STRICTER REGULATION TO ENSURE A MORE
BALANCED TRADE."

4. STORIES ALSO HIGHLIGHT GOP SUSPICION OF TRANSIT ARRANGEMENTS.
ARTICLES STATE THAT ISSUE OF SUCH FACILITIES MAY BE
RAISED IN CONTEXT OF REVIEW OF TRADE RELATIONS, "ACCORDING
TO SOME INDIAN COMMENTATORS" (SIC), GOI STANDS TO GAIN GREATER
BENEFIT FROM RECIPROCAL TRANSIT FACILITIES. ALSO, PAKISTAN'S
PRESENT TRANSPORT SYSTEM COULD NOT ABSORB THE ADD-
ITIONAL LOAD WITHOUT AN EXPENDITURE OF "SEVERAL
BILLION DOLLARS OVER A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME".
THE COMMON MARKET PROPOSAL IS EQUALLY SQUELCHED WITH THE
STATEMENT THAT THE IDEA "HAS NOT BEEN CLEARLY SPELLED OUT",
AND IS IS A COMPLICATED EXERCISE AND TOO FAR-REACHING TO
BE HASTILY CONSIDERED."

5. GOP HAS BEEN UNDER PRESSURE FROM PARTIES
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ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM TO GIVE ASSURANCES THAT PAKISTAN
WILL NOT BE THE LOSER IN THE VAJPAYEE TALKS. ZIA HAS
BEEN ASKED BY POLITICAL PARTY LEADERS TO RAISE KASHMIR
ISSUE AND TO GUARD AGAINST "INDIAN HEGEMONISTIC DESIGNS".
TODAY'S STORIES ARE GOVERNMENT ATTEMPT TO
MOLLIFY THOSE CONCERNED THAT PAKISTAN'S INTERESTS
MAY BE JEOPARDIZED DURING VISIT. GOP POSITION
ALSO PUTS GOI (AND OBLIQUELY THE SHAH AS WELL) ON NOTICE
THAT ISLAMABAD STILL HAS GRAVE DOUBTS ABOUT TRANSIT AND
COMMON MARKET PROPOSALS AND BOTH ARE FAR FROM FRUITION. HUMMEL

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